

The L O V E R.

By MARMADUKE MYRTLE, *Gent.*

*What Pains! what racking Thoughts! he proves,
Who lives remov'd from her he loves.* Congreve.

Thursday, May 20. 1714.

MY own unhappy Passion for Mrs. Page has made me extremely sensible of all the Distresses occasioned by Love. I have often reflected on what could be the Cause, that while we see the most worthless part of Mankind every Day succeeding in their Attempts, while we see those Wretches whose Hearts are utterly incapable of this noble Passion, appear stupid and senseless amidst the Caresses of the Fair; we cannot but observe, that the noblest and greatest Flames which have been kindled in the Breasts of Men of Sense and Merit, have seldom met with a due Return.

As the Thoughts of those who have been thoroughly in Love are frequently wild and extravagant, I have been sometimes tempted to think, that Providence, never designing we should fix our thoughts of Happiness altogether here, will not allow us to taste so large a Share of it as we must necessarily do in the Enjoyment of an Object on which all the Passions of our Soul have been placed, and to which all the Faculties of our Mind have been long aspiring.

It is certain, however, that without having Recourse to a superior Power, there are several Accidents which naturally happen on these Occasions, and from whence we may generally give a pretty good Account why the greatest Passions are usually unsuccessful. It has been long since observed by a celebrated French Writer, that it is much easier for

Man to succeed who only feigns a Passion, than one who is truly and desperately in Love. The first is still Master of himself, and can watch all the Turns and Revolutions in the Temper of her whom

he would engage. The latter is too much taken up with his own Passion to attend any thing else: It is with difficulty he can even persuade himself to speak; when he finds every thing he can say so short of what he feels, and that his Conceptions are too tender to be expressed by Words: The Fair, generally speaking, are not sufficiently sensible of the Value they ought to put upon such a Passion, nor consider how strong that Love must be which shall throw the most Eloquent into the utmost Confusion before them. *Flavia* is an unhappy Instance of what I am observing; she was courted at once by *Tom Trifle*, and *Octavio*; the first could entertain her with his Love, with the same Indifference he talked on any other Occasion, and with great Serenity of Mind make a Digression from what he was saying, either to play with her Lap-dog or give his Opinion of a Suit of Knots. *Octavio*, when Fortune favoured him with an Opportunity of declaring himself, was often struck Speechless in the midst of a Sentence, and could for some time express himself no other way than by pressing her Hand and dropping a Tear. *Flavia* having duly weighed the Merit of both, married *Trifle*. His Unkindness to her after Marriage, his Inability for any thing of Business, and Carelessness in relation to his Fortune, soon plunged her into so many unhappy Circumstances, that she had long since sunk under the weight of them, had she not been constantly supported by the Interest and Assistance of the generous *Octavio*.

But besides the Reasons I have already assigned for the ill Success of the most deserving Passions, there

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there is one which I must not omit. It is the unhappiness of too many Women of Fortune and Merit, from a distrust of their own Judgment, to submit themselves entirely to the Direction of others, and rely too much on those Friendships they have contracted with some of their own Sex. These Female Acquaintance either immediately form some Design of their own upon them, in order to accomplish which every other Proposal is discouraged, or from a Spice of Envy, too incident to the Sex, cannot endure to see them ardently beloved, or think of having them pass their Days in the Arms of a Man who they are sensible would make it the Business of his Life to oblige them.

I have been led more particularly into the Subject of my present Paper, by the unhappy Passion of poor *Philander*. *Philander*, tho' of an Age which the greatest part of our Youth think fit to waste in all the Excesses of Luxury and Debauchery, has laid it out in furnishing his Mind with the most noble and manly Notions of Wisdom and Virtue. He has not at the same time forgot to make himself Master of all those little Accomplishments which the polite have agreed to think necessary for a well-bred Man; and is equally qualified for the most important Affairs, or the most gay Conversation. A perfect Knowledge of the World has made him for a long time look with the utmost Contempt on that insipid part of the Female Sex, who are skilled in nothing but Dress and Vanity. His Heart remained untouched amidst a thousand Beauties, till a particular Accident first brought him to the Knowledge of the lovely, the virtuous *Emilia*. *Emilia*, with a Fortune that might command the Vanities of Life, has shewn that she has a Mind infinitely above them. Her Beauty serves but as the Varnish to her Virtues, while with a graceful Innocence peculiar to her, she declares, that if ever she becomes a Wife, she has no Ambition to be a Gawdy Slave, but shall prefer substantial Happiness to empty Shew. *Philander* saw and loved her, with a Passion equal to so much Desert: His Birth and Fortune must have entitled him at least to a favourable hearing, had not his Love given the Alarm to the Designs of a She Friend. There is something at all times highly barbarous in aspersing the absent, even where the Case is doubtful; but the malicious Creature, who takes it upon her to be *Emilia's* Directress, is foolish enough to charge *Philander* with being deficient in those very things for which he is more remarkably conspicuous: As I am a constant Patron to virtuous Love, I am in hopes however, that should this Paper reach *Emilia*, she will be so just to her self to be her own Judge in a Cause of this Consequence; since, as a celebrated Author observes, it is very certain, that a generous and constant Passion, in an agreeable Lover, is the greatest Blessing that can happen to the most deserving of her Sex; and if overlooked in one, may perhaps never after be found in another.

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